

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
and Immunization Section**

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**Health Advisory: Update on Zika Guidance Including Prevention of Sexual Transmission, 2/24/16**

**Actions requested:**

- Be aware that Zika virus can be sexually transmitted by a man to his sex partners even in the absence of symptoms of Zika virus infection. Zika virus can persist in semen longer than in blood. Mosquitoes remain the primary route of transmission of Zika virus infection
- Take a travel history routinely to identify persons at risk for Zika virus and other travel-related infections.
- Advise men who have traveled to an area of active Zika virus transmission and who have a pregnant partner to abstain from sexual activity or consistently and correctly use condoms during sex (i.e., vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, or fellatio) for the duration of the pregnancy.
- Discuss with pregnant women their male partner's history of travel to Zika-affected areas.
- Advise pregnant patients to consider postponing travel to [areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing](#) because of the potential for [microcephaly](#) and other adverse health effects in babies of mothers infected with Zika virus while pregnant.
- Advise pregnant women who can't postpone travel to an area with Zika virus transmission to strictly follow comprehensive steps to avoid mosquito bites. Insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, and IR3535 are considered safe for pregnant women when used as directed. See CDC site for complete prevention info.
- Report suspected Zika cases to Public Health at 206-296-4774. There is no commercially available lab test for Zika infection; PCR and serologic testing can be arranged by Public Health when indicated.
- No specific antiviral treatment is available for Zika disease. Treatment is generally supportive and can include rest, fluids, and use of analgesics and antipyretics. Avoid NSAID drugs in persons who may have dengue virus infection; pregnant women who have a fever may be treated with acetaminophen.

**Testing guidance:**

- Test all persons (regardless of pregnancy status) with travel to an area of active Zika virus transmission and who report  $\geq 2$  of the following symptoms within 2 weeks of travel: acute onset fever, maculopapular rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis. Obtain specimens during the 1st week of illness if possible.
- Offer testing to pregnant women (regardless of symptoms) with possible exposure to Zika virus through travel to an area of active Zika virus transmission during pregnancy or through sexual exposure to a man who has traveled to an area of Zika transmission and developed symptoms of Zika virus infection. Obtain specimens within the first week of illness if ill or within 2-12 weeks of exposure if asymptomatic.
  - If fetal ultrasounds detect microcephaly or intracranial calcifications, pregnant women who originally tested negative for Zika virus infection following travel should be retested for Zika virus infection. In these cases, also consider amniocentesis for Zika virus testing.
- Test women experiencing fetal loss who have had travel to an area with known Zika virus transmission during pregnancy if not previously tested
- Test infants born to women who traveled during pregnancy to an area with Zika virus transmission and have evidence of maternal infection (mothers with positive or inconclusive test results for Zika virus infection) or fetal infection (infants with microcephaly or intracranial calcifications)
- Test infants who have two or more of the following symptoms within 2 weeks of birth: acute onset of fever, maculopapular rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis and are born to a mother who traveled to an area with active Zika virus transmission within 2 weeks of delivery.
- At this time, testing of exposed, asymptomatic men for the purpose of assessing risk for sexual transmission is not recommended.

**RESOURCES**

- Guidance for healthcare providers: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/hc-providers/index.html>
- FAQ on Zika virus: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/qa/index.html>
- General information about Zika virus and disease: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>